



ESEA Information Update

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction/Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent, P.O. Box 7841/Madison, WI 53707-7841

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TOPIC: ESEA Consortia

Definitions

Consortia are partnership agreements in which the participating members pool their funds for a common purpose. A consortium is typically formed to meet the intent of a specific title when individual participating local education agencies (LEAs) lack sufficient resources or expertise to adequately provide the program or services alone. Consortia are allowed for the following formula-driven ESEA programs:

- Title II Part A
- Title II Part D
- Title III Part A (must generate a consortium allocation of at least \$10,000)
- Title IV Part A
- Title V Part A

When an LEA decides to enter into a consortium agreement, it turns over its entire program allocation to the consortium and in return receives the programs or services allowable under the law and consensually agreed upon by the consortium participants.

Although participating LEAs do not submit separate applications for funds, they are responsible for ensuring the requirements for receiving the funds are adhered to and federal ESEA goals are met.

ESEA Consortia and the ESEA Electronic Application

LEA Responsibilities

An LEA wishing to enter into a consortium for specific titles under ESEA may do so by selecting the "Surrender Allocation" option for each program budget on the "Fiscal Agent Decisions" screen in the ESEA application. By selecting this option, the LEAs elect to surrender their entire program allocation to the consortium. The district must sign a consortium agreement describing the programs and services it will receive from the consortium. The LEA program plan in the consolidated application must include a description of the programs and services it is receiving from the consortium for a particular title. The LEA also is responsible for meeting the equitable participation requirements for private schools. The school district must submit a written affirmation from each private school serving students who reside in the public school attendance area. This affirmation assures that the private schools are provided meaningful consultation and indicates the titles in which a private school wishes to participate. The school district and consortium fiscal agent must work together to ensure that the participating private schools receive their equitable share of program services.

Fiscal Agent Responsibilities

The consortium fiscal agent is responsible for submitting consortium program goals, including activities and services, signatures of participating members, and a budget detailing projected expenditures. A program plan should be provided to all participating districts outlining the services, programs, and activities participating consortium members will receive. At the close of the fiscal year, any unexpended funds will be considered carryover funds for the consortium into the next fiscal year. The fiscal agent is responsible for submitting all reimbursement claims to DPI. The fiscal agent should work with each participating district to ensure the equitable participation rights of private school children are met.

Consortia that flow funds back to the participating districts

In the case of a consortium arrangement where a portion of the funds is returned by the fiscal agent to the LEA to control and spend for local use, a local budget describing how these funds will be spent must be approved by DPI. The electronic application allows the consortium fiscal agent to complete both the consortium budget and the LEA budgets for funds returned to the LEA for local use. In this type of consortium arrangement, each participating district's local use of funds must also be approved by DPI. The fiscal agent is responsible for tracking the expenditures of all funds at the local and consortium levels. Fiscal agents and participating LEAs should agree on how carryover funds will be allocated to member districts prior to the start of the fiscal year. Claims for reimbursement must be submitted by the consortium's fiscal agent.

All budget revisions must be submitted to DPI by the consortium's fiscal agent. If the local district budget is amended, the consortium fiscal agent must resubmit the local budget along with the consortium budget for approval.

For more information on being a fiscal agent, see the Department of Public Instruction Fiscal Agent Policy at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dfm/sfms/doc/fisagnt.doc>.

Specific questions related to this bulletin should be directed to:

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